

REMARKS

Independent claim 6 has been amended to explicitly require that the claimed method is performed sequentially. Applicant submits that this amendment clarifies a limitation that was implicit in the original claim and that no new matter has been added.

New dependant claims 11-14 have been added and clarify the specific configuration of the claimed connector. These new dependant claims have basis in paragraphs [0045] and [0046] of the specification as published.

Claims 6-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by German DE 202 11 150 to Vohrer. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Vohrer discloses a plastic coupling port formed on the end of a hose in a single step injection moulding process. Amended independent claim 6 now explicitly requires that the claimed method be performed in two distinct steps. As Vohrer discloses a coupling part fabricated from a single step injection moulding process it cannot anticipate the claimed method as it does not disclose each limitation of the claim.

Claim 6-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 3,963,856 to Carlson et al. in view of United States Patent No. 3,779,846 to Kleykamp et al. and United States Publication No. 2003/0236015 to Edirisuriya et al. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

The Examiner has stated that "one cannot show non obviousness by attacking references individually where rejections are based on combinations of reference". However, the Examiner has not presented an articulation of the reasons why one of ordinary skill in the art would

combine the cited references to arrive at the claimed invention. Such an articulation is explicitly required under section 2141 of the MPEP:

The key to supporting any rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 is the clear articulation of the reason(s) why the claimed invention would have been obvious. The Supreme Court in KSR noted that the analysis supporting a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 should be made explicit. The Court quoting *In re Kahn*, 441 F.3d 977, 988, 78 USPQ2d 1329, 1336 (Fed. Cir. 2006), stated that "[R]ejections on obviousness cannot be sustained by mere conclusory statements; instead, there must be some articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness.

As none of the cited references disclose or even suggest a two step injection molding process, Applicant submits that it is not obvious to combine the references to arrive at a two step injection molding process as claimed in the method of independent claim 6 as amended.

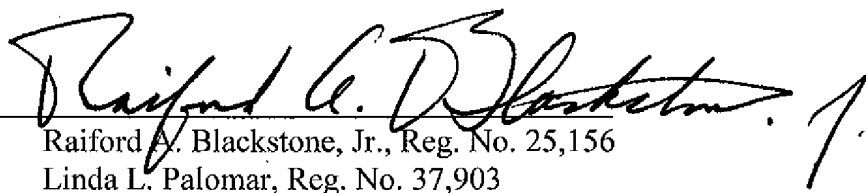
A Request for Continued Examination and a Petition for a One-Month Extension of Time are concurrently submitted with this Amendment.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this Amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact one of the undersigned attorneys at (312) 704-1890.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:


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